

# Step-Up Pipelines Program Report

# Table of Contents

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01

Executive  
Summary

02

Introduction

03

Program  
Description

04

Evaluation  
Background

05

Evaluation  
Methods

06

Conclusions

07

Recommendations

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## Executive Summary

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This report provides an overview of SOPHE's Step-Up Pipelines Program, the evaluations, and recommendations from the pilot year that took place from October 2022 through May 2023.



The Step-Up Pipelines Program program enhances students' public health interests, fosters diverse career exploration, and develops personal and professional skills.

The evaluation of the program included pre-program and post-program measurements. SOPHE's hypotheses included increases in students' public health knowledge and career awareness.

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**There was a significant increase in students' awareness of public health career opportunities.**

With a diverse student group and a 9-month program, SOPHE found no significant increases in knowledge of public health concepts and interest in public health. However, There was a significant increase in students' awareness of public health career opportunities.

The Step-Up Pipelines Program plays a vital role in promoting diversity in the public health workforce. Sustainability and expansion efforts align with SOPHE's commitment to diversity and equity, offering opportunities for continued growth and impact.

## Introduction

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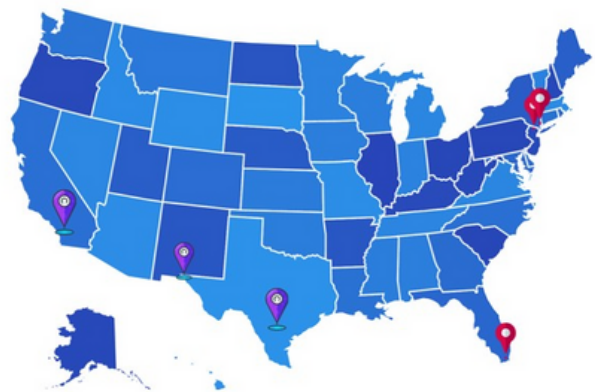
The Step-Up Pipelines Program is a 9-month program aimed at increasing support and resources for Hispanic/Latino students pursuing public health careers.

The overarching goal of the Step-Up Program is to address the underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino professionals in the field of public health and to promote diversity in the public health workforce.

A needs assessment conducted with students and faculty from partner institutions revealed a need for professional development resources targeted toward Hispanic/Latino undergraduate public health students. The pilot year launched in 2022 with 19 Hispanic/Latino undergraduate students across 6 partner Hispanic Serving Institutions:

- Chaffey College - Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Doña Ana Community Colleges - Las Cruces, NM
- Northwest Vista College - San Antonio, TX
- Florida International University - Miami, FL
- Lehman College - Bronx, NY
- Montclair State University - Montclair, NJ

Students in the program had opportunities to deepen public health interests, explore diverse career options, develop personal and professional skills, and build community with a network of peers, mentors, and advisors through the program.



# Program Description

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## Program Goals and Structure



The goals of the Step-Up Program are to:

- Increase awareness and interest among Hispanic/Latino students to pursue a career in public health
- Strengthen support and resources for Hispanic/Latino students in public health degree programs
- Build community among students and mentors
- Promote diversity in the public health workforce to create a workforce that represents our society
- Address health disparities and as we work towards health equity

To achieve these goals, the pilot year was organized into three pillars.



### Mentorship

Students were paired with individual mentors to help them navigate the field. Mentors were SOPHE national or chapter members. Mentor pairs were asked to meet monthly throughout the nine-month program.



### Professional Development and Community Building

Students participated in monthly virtual learning and networking sessions with other participants across the six partner institutions.

Curriculum topics are listed below:

- Orientation Session
- Holiday Networking Mixer
- Exam Preparation and the CHES Exam
- Public Health Career Panel
- International Women's Day Networking Mixer
- Professional Development (Networking, Resume Tips, and LinkedIn)
- Closing Celebration



### SOPHE Membership

Students received one year of paid SOPHE membership and access to SOPHE member benefits. Selected students also attended the 2023 SOPHE Annual Conference with expenses paid by the Step-Up Program.

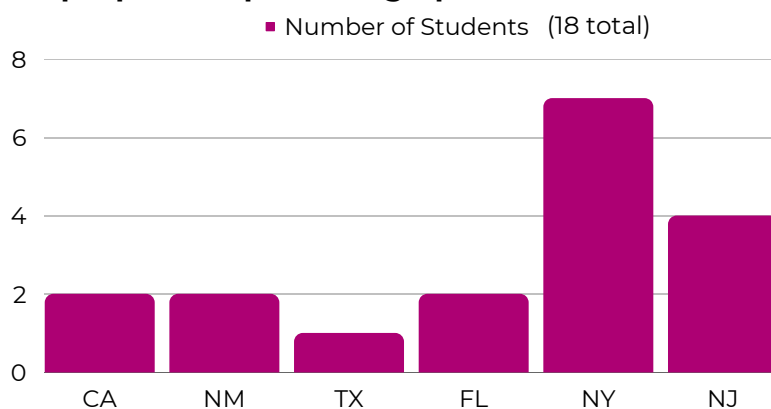
## Evaluation Overview

The Step-Up Pipelines Program evaluation activities include a pre-test and post-program measurement and monthly surveys that were appraised at the end of the 9-month program.

The Step-Up Pipelines Program hypothesized that students would demonstrate increased knowledge and awareness of public health concepts and career options. The evaluation also aimed to capture information regarding students' mentorship relationships, retention in public health education and career paths, and overall experiences in the program.

### Participant Demographics

#### Step-Up Participant Geographic Locations



67%

of students speak Spanish at home.

22%

of students are full-time students and part-time employed.

12 out of the 18 students were first generation students.

67%

### Strengths

Students considered the communication and connection with SOPHE members a meaningful program component. Students also expressed appreciation for the monthly sessions and the wealth of information shared. When asked about the most beneficial aspects of SOPHE membership, students highlighted the significance of mentorship, access to SOPHE journals, and participation in SOPHE events as the key sources of value.

### Challenges

Students identified the need for refinements in the program's timeline and scheduling to better accommodate student schedules. Additionally, a number of students suggested incorporating more internship and job opportunities as well as increased hands-on and local engagement.

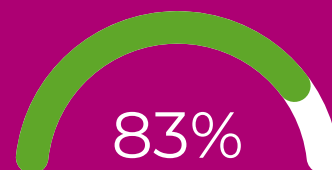
## Evaluation Methods and Results

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SOPHE collected information on baseline levels of interest in public health, awareness of public health career opportunities, and knowledge of public health concepts using a Likert Scale. The analysis assessed program outcomes by measuring changes in these levels before and after the completion of the Step-Up Program. Data were analyzed using SAS Analytics Software. Multivariate analysis was performed to determine the relationship between program completion and the outcomes of interest, as well as to control for the expected moderators.

Key Indicator	Data/Outcome
Knowledge of Public Health Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No significant change was found.</li></ul>
Awareness of Public Health Career Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive change was found.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ There was a significant increase in students' awareness of public health career opportunities through the program.</li></ul></li></ul>
Interest in Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No significant change was found.</li></ul>

15 out of 18 participants reported the program's significant impact on their career choice.




# Conclusion


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The Step-Up Pipelines Program was created to promote diversity in the public health workforce, with a focus on Hispanic/Latino professionals in the field.

This representation depends on students entering the field, and the support and resources that these students receive to help ensure long-term success. The Step-Up Program strives to strengthen these resources to encourage diversity in both SOPHE membership as well as the general public health workforce. A diverse and representative public health workforce will be better equipped to serve the needs of our communities.

	<h3>Funding Sources</h3> <p>Step-Up Pipelines Program is currently funded through 2023 through SOPHE's internal budget.</p>
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<h3>Sustainability</h3> <p>The sustainability of this program is critical to its success and is aligned with SOPHE's strategic plan.</p>	
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	<h3>Personnel</h3> <p>The Step-Up Pipelines Program will be supported by a CDC Public Health Associate through October 2024.</p>
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## Recommendations

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To continue SOPHE's efforts in workforce development, these are recommendations to SOPHE and the Step-Up Pipelines Program.

01

### Strengthen partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with Hispanic-serving institutions and other Minority-serving Institutions (HBCUs, TCUs, AANAPISIs) to increase SOPHE student membership and engagement.

02

### Grow content offerings

Integrate Step-Up Pipelines Program webinars and content (public health and professional development topics) into SOPHE's existing Professional Development webinars, and grow student-oriented content offerings.

03

### Integrate mentorship

Integrate mentorship as a larger SOPHE member benefit for student and early career members within SOPHE's overall membership structure and incentives.

04

### Coordinate Alumni

Organize the annual Step-Up Pipelines Program cohort to foster a sense of community among both current participants and program alumni.

05

### Ensure Funding for Program's Sustainability

Dedicate funds from the annual SOPHE budget and explore external funding sources for program sustainability. A proactive approach to funding and resource allocation will help secure the future of this initiative.

# Acknowledgements

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We extend our gratitude to the exceptional contributors of the Step-Up Pipelines Program. Your dedication and tireless efforts have played a pivotal role in creating a positive impact in our work toward a diverse workforce.

The Society for Public Health Education Board of Trustees  
The Society for Public Health Education Staff  
The Step-Up Pipelines Program Advisory Group  
The Step-Up Pipelines Program Faculty Group  
Paola Bayona Roque, Program Evaluator  
Step-Up Students, Mentors and Alumni  
CDC Public Health Associate Program

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Thank you for your ongoing support of the Step-Up Pipelines Program. We greatly appreciate your continued assistance.

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